

Remarks

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the outstanding Office Action. Claims 9, 18-21, and 23-24 are presented herewith for consideration. Claims 17 and 22 have been cancelled and claims 9, 18 and 24 are amended.

Filed concurrently herewith is an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS). The Examiner is respectfully requested to review the cited art and return initialed copies of the IDS.

Claims 17, 18 and 24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

While the Applicant disagrees with the rejections of claims 9, 19, 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,997,298 (*Nowak*) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,188,952 (*Loschilov, et al.*), as well as the rejection of claims 20 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Nowak*, claims 9 (including the limitations of claim 17), 18 and 24 have been rewritten in independent form in order to expedite prosecution. Further, the Applicant expressly disagrees that the "V2 tip" is not shown or is required in the drawings, but has cancelled claim 22 to expedite prosecution.

Based on the above amendments and these remarks, reconsideration of claims 9, 18-21 and 23-24 is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions with regard to the instant response, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 501826 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: /Kirk J. DeNiro/
Kirk J. DeNiro
Reg. No. 35,854

VIERRA MAGEN MARCUS & DE NIRO LLP
575 Market Street, Suite 2500
San Francisco, California 94105-4206
Telephone: (415) 369-9660
Facsimile: (415) 369-9665